

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Government Affairs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

March 18, 2003

The Honorable Jim Nussle
Chairman, House Budget Committee
210 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The U.S House of Representatives is expected to vote on H. Con. Res. 95, the Fiscal Year 2004 Wartime Budget Resolution later this week. Passage of this measure will ensure that our nation's national security, economic security and personal security needs are met.

The committee-reported concurrent resolution contains \$380 billion in total budget authority for the Department of Defense and includes the President's request of \$9.1 billion to begin the deployment of defenses against long-range ballistic missile threats. Specific measures supported by this budget include increases in training and education, as well as the largest increase ever in Research & Development for the armed services.

The Chairman's mark also includes full funding for the President's highest domestic priority – providing \$41 billion for homeland security activities, which includes \$3.5 billion for first responders, and \$4.8 billion for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to continue to improve security in our nation's airports and transportation systems.

Maintaining a strong transportation infrastructure is also critical. We appreciate the committee's work to provide the framework necessary for robust growth in our surface transportation program. Transportation investment helps create and sustain 1.5 million jobs and generate more than \$64 billion in economic growth, while helping to reduce congestion throughout the country.

In addition, this budget resolution specifies \$726 billion in tax relief over the next ten years to fully implement the President's Economic Growth and Jobs package. This President's package includes accelerating the bi-partisan tax relief enacted in 2001, eliminating the double taxation of dividends – which are expected to create an additional 1.4 million jobs – and making the 2001 tax cuts permanent. Creating jobs and getting our economy rolling again are top priorities of the U.S. Chamber.

No budget resolution is perfect, but this measure continues the economic and budget policies that will continue the positive growth of our nation's economy and provide the resources to protect our country and assets at home and abroad. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, representing more than 3 million organizations of every size, sector, and region, urges you to support the Fiscal Year 2004 Wartime Budget Resolution to its eventual passage.

Because of the importance of this issue, the U.S. Chamber will strongly consider including votes on or in relation to the FY 2004 Wartime Budget Resolution in our annual "How they Voted" rankings.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

R. Bruce Josten